



## **Start of Kurt D. Singer Collection**

**AR 11654**

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AR 11654

VI

Kurt D. Singer Collection undated, 1999-2005

THE AUSTRIAN HERITAGE COLLECTION AT THE LEO BAECK INSTITUTE  
AUSTRIAN-JEWISH IMMIGRANTS IN THE USA

LEO BAECK INSTITUTE: 129 E 73 STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10021, TEL (212) 744 6400

Date of Birth: 8 10 1911 Place of Birth: VIENNA AUSTRIA  
Month Day Year City Country  
Address before 1938: GROSSE PERARSSIES WIEN AUTONIA 410 SUEDE  
Street (District in Vienna) City Country  
Prewar Name: KURT DEUTSCH Maiden Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Education/Occupation(s) (if possible, indicate institutions and year when entered/left)

EIDGENÖSSISCHE HOCHSCHULE ZÜRICH 1932  
ABE COLLEGE STOCKHOLM 1939  
UNIV. MINNESOTA 1950  
UNIV. KANSAS 1952  
INDIANA 1955

2. Were you affiliated with any kind of organization? (Youth, Zionist, Political or any other organizations)  
If so, did you have any specific function?

SOCIAL DEMOCRAT

3. Were you arrested and/or interned? (please indicate where and when)

NO

4. What was your route of emigration? (please indicate places and dates of stay)

BERLIN - REICHENBERG - DACH - WIEN  
STOCKHOLM - USA NYC - CALIFORNIA

5. May we contact you again with a more detailed follow-up questionnaire?

Yes / No

6. Do you have any documents that would be appropriate for the archives of the Leo Baeck Institute? (personal documents, photographs, letters, all kinds of manuscripts, diaries, memoirs, etc.)

Yes / No

If necessary please use additional sheets. Thank you!



++++

March 28 00

Dear Dr. Mecklenburg and Staff

Many thanks for your letter and your questionnaire. Here are my answers which I hope will be of help to your important research work about the Austrian exiles.

1.1 My parental home was located at Neumayergasse 5 (in Wien at the Schmeltz). My father owned the house there were no servants. During World War I when my father served with the k. and k. armies I lived some times with my grand parents at Wurlitzergasse 24 also in Wien. Both locations were in Ottakring. We spoke German even Wienerisch. My grandparents spoke sometimes in Czech if I was supposed not to hear it.

I also lived with my Parents in Berlin, Wilmersdorfer Strasse 77. After the death of my father my mother moved with my grandparents to Courbiere Strasse 12 also in Berlin-Charlottenburg.

1.2 Always had good relations with neighbors. I remember only one incident as a child of 6 years when some Lsausbuben yelled at me

Jud Jud spuck ins Hut

Sag der Mutter das ist gut.

I answered in my first poem

Christ Christ

spuck in Mist

sag der Mutter

was ein Esel du bist.

When I complained to a priest at the nearby Kalvarien Kirche he said: "Forge\* it. God loves all children." Working Class area strong Social Democrats.

1.3 Limited religious tradition. No kosher household Visited temple during high holidays. Grand father prayed a lot at home.

1.4 I had always both Jewish and gentile friends .No preference but one friend was a Zionist the first one I ever met.

1.5 I belonged to the Boy Scouts. Later to Social Democratic and Socialist organizations. No special functions.

1.6 Where ever you had Nazis or sympathizers you had anti-Semitism .No personal attacks but oral utterances.

1.7 My father died in 1929. My mother did not realize the dangers nor did my grandmother. My

grandfather always told me that the Prussians who had started a war again Austria were now returning as Nazis and were a danger to Austria. He repeated again and again Prussians mean war.

2.1 I had left Vienna before the Anschluss . I thought I was safe in Sweden-for the time being.

2.2 Friends and neighbors were anti-Nazi. One friend a Social Democrat had joined the SA. He came to see me in his brown uniform. He had joined them since they gave him a uniform and food and he was unemployed but still a Socialist. He took some of my books und buried them in his Schraeber Garten . But that was in Berlin. None of my gentile friends betrayed me.

2.3 I remember November 9<sup>th</sup> 1938 the day I arrived on a ship coming from Bergen Norway to New Castle in England. I showed my Austrian passport and my wife's passport and the British let us into their country.

2.4 My wife Hilde Tradelius was arrested in Berlin in February 1934 for helping to publish an underground newspaper which I edited. I was able to escape via Reichenberg, Sudetenland to Vienna. She served one year in the Moabit prison in Berlin.

My mother Irene Singer vanished in a KMZ.,

My grandparents Julius and Clementine Singer vanished in a KZ

My mother in law Alice Tradelius hanged herself in prison( Official explanation )

My uncle Adolf Deutsch vanished in a KZ and cousins Richard Deutsch vanished in Jugoslavia and Nemeti Sandor died in a KZ My uncle Leo Bratmann and others in the Bratmann and Klueger families vanished ,too.

2.5 My wife Hilde, my 5 month old daughter Marian and I received our entry visa to the USA from an anti Nazi Consul General William C. Corcoran in Gothenburg, Sweden.. I had published a biography of Hermann Goering the Luftwaffe Chief and The Nazi Government had asked to confiscate the book which they did. In addition they demanded my extradition. Sweden declined but told me through a high police official I better leave the country. The head of Sweden's Refugee Committee Mia Leche Loefgren ( wife of former foreign and justice minister) spoke then with the editor of Gothenburg's Handel's och Sjoefarts Tidning Torgny Segerstedt and he appointed me as their foreign correspondent to go to the USA, Consul General Corcoran issued the visa.

2.6 Our business the Oliva Buchhandlung in Berlin- Charlottenburg was confiscated. Our home at Jenaer Strasse 9 in Wilmersdorf was ransacked and closed.

2.7 I left Austria in April 1934.

2.8 I lived in Stockholm, Sweden from April or May 1934 to July 1940. I left Sweden to avoid internment or extradition to Nazi Germany. Left with a Swedish Alien Passport. I worked in Sweden as a journalist, author and active in Anti-Nazi activities. Organized the Carl von Ossietzky Committee and worked with Karl Frahm in Norway better known as Chancellor Willy Brandt.

3.1 I arrived in Brooklyn NY harbor on July 3<sup>rd</sup> 1940 and I was put with my family into Ellis Island. All visas had been canceled on account of the fall of France.

3.2 My uncle Ignatz Zilzer and wife Rosa and son Alfred and Alfred's wife and daughter Gunilla went from Sweden to Toronto Canada. I have no contact.

3.3 In a capacity of a civilian I did intelligence work for the USA and also for the Norwegian Government in Exile. Much is described in my books Spied and Traitors of World War II and Duel for the Northland and I Spied and Survived.

3.4 We lived in a rented room on the West side in NYC for my first 3 weeks. Than until 1943 in Brooklyn on East 4<sup>th</sup> street. Than in Bronxville N.Y.  
Moved Oyster Bay LI NY, to Coral Gables Florida.. Than Riverside NY and finally to California in 1954 at Stanton Ave. In Buena Park and Carnation Drive in Buena Park from 1985-99 at 717 Balboa Avenue, Laguna Beach CA and since then at 6019 Suellen Court, Goleta, CA. All were non Jewish and non German or Austrian neighborhoods.

3.5 I continued my life as a journalist and author. The start was very difficult. I sold articles to the Norksk Tidende in Brooklyn, the NY TIMES printed my article how the King of Norway, Haakon VI. escaped to England .I earned \$ 50.00. I became director of the Scandinavian diivision of the Laguardia Committee to re-elect President Roosevelt for \$ 25.00 a week plus expenses. I bought my first old Ford car with a rumple seat for \$50.00.

I began to lecture in my broken English to tell about the Nazi cruelties and holocaust. My first book in the USA was published in 1943 Duel for the Northland. My second SPIES AND TRAITORS OF WORLD WAR II was a best seller. Thanks to Walter Winchell who had plugged it on the radio. I wrote many articles also for Reader's Digest and women magazines. I was a radio commentator in Brooklyn and Miami Beach and published over 100 books also in foreign languages. I lectured in schools, colleges, universities, service and women clubs. During the war I spoke at army and air force installations about the psychology of the Nazi troops .

3.6. I was too busy to join any group but I did lecture for the Anti Defamation League and had close contacts to the Anti Nazi League in NYC.

3.7 I don't speak German very often. Some times with my first wife or visiting journalists from Germany My children and grand children don't speak German.

3.8 I am a convinced freethinker and agnostic but respect all religions and a higher power.

3.9 Most of my acquaintances and friends are not Jewish and speak not German.

3.10 I am a USA citizen since 1951

3.11 I have visited Austria 6 times since the war. Also lectured in Wien at the Literaturhaus and was guest of the city of Vienna., The Literaturhaus produced a documentary which includes my life in Austria. They also have most of my books and writings etc. To me Austria is a small paradise in comparison with her Eastern Balkan countries. Return to Austria is not in the cards. Att 88 and sick it's impossible also my children and grandchildren live in the USA My Korean born wife Katherine was with me visiting Vienna.

4.1 I have been interviewed by the Literaturhaus in Wien, By many newspaper, radio and tv stations..

4.2 I have been mentioned in the Saur Verlag Bibliography of German speaking authors( Dr.

Spatek) in Who's Who in America, in Die Carl von Ossietzky Kampagne in Schweden by Christoph Schottes, in the Ossietzky Zeitschrift and others. Also in the Literaturhaus documentary, exhibits and books.

5.1 Hilda Tradelius, born in Berlin May 27 1911 , retired X-Ray technician lives in NYC  
Jane Sherrod born in Wichita Falls, Texas May 26 1917 deceased January 5 1985, book consultant and author.

Katherine (Kyung Ja Han) Han born in Seoul Korea on October 9 1944 business executive.

5.2 MOTHER Irene Bratmann born in Wien November 27 birth year unknown to me, housewife

5.3 Father Ignatz Deutsch born in Wien July 5 Year ??

5.5 Kenneth Walt Singer son born In NY on November 1 1945, executive director for Retarded Citizens in Pittsfield Mass.

Marian Birgit Singer Fozard born in Stockholm, Sweden on January 5 1940, College teacher, Palm Harbor Fla.

5..5 Grandchildren: Kala Singer born in Conn She graduated as Occupatgional Therapist from the Boston University and works at the St. Katherine's Hospital in NYC. and Joshua Hillel Singer born in Mass, He still studies at Amherst.

5.6 Julius Singer born in Bohemia near Brno. Youngest of 14 children business man  
Clementine Bratmann born in Bohemia near Brno oldest of 13 children, housewife.

Austrian Jewish Immigrants: Hermann and Josephine Neumann, Architect and seamstress, last known in NYC.

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I hope these bits of information are helpful to you. If more is needed please contact me again.  
Reading my answers I detected that I used the Im word so often instead of the WE word. But you asked mosdltly for my personal data.

My best cordial wishes



Kurt Deutsch Singer

## Scholem Asch and Catholicism

It happened almost 50 years ago in Miami, Florida. It was during hot autumn days in 1949. I was a radio commentator and hosted a Human Relation Board show. I hoped that Schalom Asch the famous Yiddish author would be my guest. His book "The Apostle" the story of Saul who became St. Paul had recently been published. I still remember clearly when Asch explained to me why the Jewish Saul had visualized what later became the Catholic Church. "Judaism and Catholicism have so much in common" he reiterated with a very convincing smile which brightened his aging sun tanned face. Scholem Asch then told me that he had many serious discussions with Catholic priests and cardinals. They had tried to convince him to join the church.

"And why didn't you?" I asked. Now his face showed strain and in a very definite tone this Jewish scholar and author theorized, and I quote what I still remember "Never. I regard Catholicism very highly and admire them and I am very grateful to the Catholic Church because

they have taught me much and above all I learned from them that if you accept religion you have to go all the way." He repeated "all the way" several times.

Then Scholem Asch continued, all the way meant, you accept all traditions, all rules, all their laws and all the needed sacrifices. He ended this interview by saying "This is why I will always remain an orthodox Jew, write in my native Yiddish though I could write in English or German. I believe in the orthodox teachings of Judaism. I understand reform Judaism but it is not for me."

Scholem Asch was proud of being a Jew who knew Jewish life but also Jewish history and the history of Poland. At one point during our interview he mentioned that 3 million Poles had been killed by the Nazis and Polish Catholics had suffered as much as the Jews of Poland.

Has Scholem Asch been forgotten? If you visit your nearest book store you may find that Scholem Asch's great books are out of print.

Kurt Singer



The Yiddish novelist and playwright  
Scholem Asch photo: Jewish Encyclopedia



# A Crusader for Her Father

Away on February 7, 2000. She died in her sleep in a hospital bed in Stockholm. Another victim of leukemia. She is survived by her artist son Ebbe. Her husband, Gösta Palm, died eight years ago.

Carl von Ossietzky's daughter was 80 years old and until her last breath she tried to spread the legacy of her heroic, anti-militarist and anti-fascist father, the Nobel Peace Prize laureate. As one of the few last survivors of the Ossietzky Campaign, I would like to reminisce about the year 1936. Rosalinde (much later called Rosalinda) had escaped the Nazi terror and was brought with a *Kindertransport* visa to England. There she was taken care of by her father's friends Rudolf Olden and Ernst Toller. The Quakers also helped financially. But Rosalinde's future was in danger since funds for her boarding school had run out.

One day, out of the blue, I received a letter from her asking me to send her a copy of my recently published biography of her father. I had written a book about Carl von Ossietzky, the courageous anti-Nazi editor, whose life was in danger in the Nazi concentration camps. It was published in Swedish and later in German with the co-author Kurt Grossmann (League for Human Rights) by Europa Press in Zürich.

I answered Rosalinde's letter immediately and sent her a copy of the book and invited her to come to Stockholm and stay with my wife Hilde and myself and join us in our fight to free her imprisoned father from the horrors of Buchenwald. I had no idea that I would be responsible for changing her entire life. Rosalinde von Ossietzky remained in Sweden from 1936 until the day she died as a Swedish citizen.

Hilde and I were 24. Rosalinde, a beautiful teenager at 16, started a new life. Members of the Swedish-Ossietzky Committee placed her in a Quaker-oriented boarding school. She was interviewed by the Swedish press and this, no doubt, helped the Ossietzky Campaign to a very large extent.



The 16-year-old Rosalinde von Ossietzky in a photograph dedicated to the author.  
photo: Riwkin / private

dal finally found its way to Rosalinda. At the same time Reichsfeldmarschall Hermann Göring had asked for my extradition and the confiscation of my Göring biography. I had no choice but to leave Sweden, and my family and I departed for the USA. It was at that time that Rosalinde became Rosalinda and continued to work for her father's legacy. It became her life's goal and passion.

She settled down as a family consultant for the Swedish Government, giving advice for many years to thousands of Swedish families and helping to solve their personal and financial problems. She was available day and night by phone or in person. She was honored by most of her clients. Still, in all those years, she maintained contacts with as many of her father's friends as possible and the writers of his *Welthöhne*.

When I returned to Sweden in 1985, I saw Rosalinda again. She was now in her late sixties and still working for her father's legacy. With her was Dr. Elke Suhr, a history professor. They interviewed me and invited me to a reunion at the Carl von Ossietzky University in Oldenburg. I accepted and gave a nostalgic lecture.

The next year Rosalinda, her son Ebbe and Dr. Elke Suhr visited me as my house guests in California. After a brief trip to Mexico, we flew to New York where Rosalinda visited the *Aufbau*, was interviewed and met old friends of her father.

Elke Suhr shot a documentary film in the home of my first wife Hilde. The *Südwestdeutsche Rundfunk* had commissioned her to produce it with the help of an NBC crew. Rosalinde, Hilde and I spoke about our activities during the Ossietzky Campaign in Sweden to free the great man and to obtain the Peace Prize for him. After that we flew to Boston to visit Dr. Howard Gotlieb, the director of Special Collections at the Boston University Library. They have the only Ossietzky Collection in the USA.

On other occasions I travelled with Rosalinda to East Berlin, which she liked very much, and to Hamburg and Oldenburg. All the trips were undertaken for her untiring crusade to make Ossietzky a part of German history and to ensure that his teachings against German nationalism and militarism and for human rights would not be forgotten.

At the beginning, there was little understanding for her father's work in West Germany. Therefore, the Communist DDR used this vacuum to revive the publication of the *Welthöhne* and honored Rosalinda with the East German Peace Prize.

Slowly, West Germany under Chancellor Willy Brandt began to recognize Ossietzky's importance, not only as an anti-Nazi hero but as an untiring leader against German militarism and anti-Semitism.

On the day Rosalinda passed away, Germany has a dozen Carl von Ossietzky schools, the Carl von Ossietzky University in Oldenburg. Carl von Ossietzky streets in many cities, an express Ossietzky train between Hamburg and Berlin and an eight-volume *Collected Works*, published by Rowohlt Verlag. It was edited by Rosalinda and professors from the Oldenburg Ossietzky University. There is also a bi-monthly Ossietzky magazine fighting for human rights which Rosalinde supported from the very beginning. Not a small achievement for the 16-year-old girl who came to Sweden.

Kurt Singer

A memorial service will be held in Stockholm on March, 3.

Anzeige

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In Oslo, Karl Frahm, later better known as Chancellor Willy Brandt, tried to influence the Labor Party members on the Nobel Committee. Rosalinda sent him a grateful thank-you note. Six months later, the impossible had happened – Carl von Ossietzky was released from the concentration camp, but he was a broken man suffering from tuberculosis.

I remember at that time I had asked Senator Zeth Hoeglund, the managing editor of the daily *Sozial Demokrat*, if he could help Rosalinde to phone her father in Berlin. I handled the recording machine. Father Ossietzky was overjoyed when he heard his daughter's voice after so many years. I remember him telling her that under no circumstances should she return to Berlin. She would be arrested.

„Don't have the prize money sent to me to Germany. Keep it in Sweden or Norway,” Ossietzky told her. He explained that he was not well but Maud, his wife, was trying to help and he had a good doctor. As he started to ask Rosalinda about her own life and education I heard three clicks ... and the phone line was broken. Gestapo was in action.

The Swedish Nobel Committee, which holds the purse strings, rushed the half-million-dollar prize money to Nazi Germany as fast as possible to avoid further problems. The money went to a Nazi attorney, who stole it. And neither Carl von Ossietzky nor his family ever saw a penny of the Peace Prize money. The Nobel Me-

March 21 00

Kurt Singer

What I remember about Archduke Otto von Habsburg.. Did he save Wien from bombing ?

I had seen Otto von Habsburg the first time in Wien when I was six years old it was during the coronation of Kaiser Karl II and Queen Zita I was told the archduke was only one year younger than I. That was in 1917. A year later I witnessed the outbreak of the Austrian revolution and the proclamation of the Austrian Republic and the end of the Austrian Hungarian empire. The royal family fled to Spain and was banned from Austria.

Through friends I had heard in 1938 that the uncrowned heir to the Habsburg throne had offered himself to the services of Austria's last democratic chancellor Kurt von Schuschnigg. He wanted to fight Hitler and resist the coming invasion with military force. He wanted a union of all Austrian parties in a war government , a mobilization of the Austrian military forces and he would lead as the new chancellor defending the homeland.. Fuerst Ruediger von Starhemberg was willing to fight with his military militia and veterans organization to help the Archduke. England and France might help While these discussions went on Hitler's armies moved into Austria and were greeted by jubilant pro Nazi and pro Anschluss citizens. { Schuschnigg had rejected the plan anyway )

From time to time I read small notices about the archduke, usually when he attended royal weddings in Europe, I read that Hitler had signed an arrest warrant and an extradition demand for the royal refugee who finally landed in the USA. His 7 brothers and sisters had also found safety in England and the USA..

Then it happened ion 1942 that I received a personal letter from Otto von Habsburg inviting me to participate in an Austrian Legion he has formed which would fight along side the American and Allied forces. Through intelligence sources in Washington I was advised to forget the entire project since the Soviet Union had protested and rejected the plan. { At the end of the war the Soviet forces occupied the Vienna Hofburg. }

Toward the end of World War II Winston Churchill promoted the idea of forming a Federation of democratic Danube countries to be governed by Otto von Habsburg as Kaiser. Stalin refused even to discuss the idea. So did Otto von Habsburg. He also refused to be king of Hungary as offered again by Hungarian monarchists.

After the war in the late forties I worked as commentator for a Miami Beach Florida radio and tv station and discovered that some of Otto von Habsburgs brothers and sisters lived in Miami and I asked Rudolf von Habsburg to be me guest on my show. He accepted but wanted \$1.000 for his appearance. In 1949 this was still a large amount wich neither I nor the station was willing to pay. However I learned that his brother Otto was now lecturing for the well known Knife and Fork Club. I, too gave some talks at the same dinner clubs . It was quite a formal society group and speakers were advised to wear a tuxedo I spoke about spies and traitors and the holocaust..His subject was his dream of a Pan Europe A kind of United States of Europe. American audiences

always loved royalties long before Princess Diana, They admired him and wished him luck and called him a "statesman" Much latter when Otto von Habsburg became a German citizen and a member of the Bavarian Christian Democrats he was elected to the European Parliament.

By then the dethroned royal had given up all claims to the Habsburg throne and crown even to the Hungarian kingdom of his forefathers. He still hoped one day he would be allowed to return to his native Austria as an ordinary citizen .It took many more years. Otto von Habsburg lectured in many countries besides the USA praising democracy, human rights , tolerance ,European union and peace. He condemned race hatred and asked for help to the holocaust victims. Not only for the victims of Germany, but all occupied countries including Austria.

In one of the questions and answers periods after his speech he admitted that he had entry to President Roosevelt and the First Lady Eleanor and was able to convince the President that Austria was the first .country Hitler had invaded and occupied and Austria was an ally. Austrians unlike some Germans were not interned during the war. It was Otto von Habsburg who pleaded with the President not to bomb Austria's capital Vienna

Most unexpected to him was when great honors were bestowed on the Archduke by the Anti Defamation League of B'nai Brith which presented their reward medal to a warrior fighting intolerance and race hatred and tolerance and global understanding.. Quite an achievement for an exiled uncrowned king who at that time was not allowed to return to his native Austria.

I was never a monarchist and believe the Austrian Republic particularly in times of neo fascism raising its ugly head again should not forget that a democratic son of the Habsburgs had saved Vienna from bombing. History holds many unknown and strange secrets.

THEY CALLED ME A ZAPPEL JUDE  
said CHARLIE CHAPLIN  
by Kurt Singer

The Year: 1951 Location: The Breakway House 1085 Summit Drive, Beverly Hills, California. The Time: 9:00 pm  
to after Midnight : Cast of Characters: Charlie Chaplin Superstar , Ivar Ohman Editor in Chief Folket i Bild, Stockholm, Sweden, Kurt Singer Author and Translator.

It was a warm September night. We drove slowly on Summit Drive to locate Chaplin's home. It was up on the hill. It had no electric gates nor a gate keeper. It was too dark to see much of the surroundings but there were large lawns, bushes, trees, a distant tennis court and a pool. It was a huge building, Chaplin had designed it himself he told us later. It had 14 rooms and he called it a California Gothic style. An architect had told me later it was built on 6 1/2 acres of his land.

The first surprise came when the door was opened by Chaplin himself not the fashionable Japanese houseman or a properly dressed maid. "Welcome to my humble home" he greeted us with a smile. I noticed the high ceilings as we walked through a never ending hall which was as long as the entire house. I noticed a tremendous sized organ , a large movie screen. We landed in his study which showed neither famous paintings nor his movies's pictures. But books were thrown all over the place.

We sat down in comfortable chairs and Ivar was ready for the interview. It had taken him almost a month to arrange it with the help of half a dozen well known people.

Chaplin seemed not in the mood to be interviewed ,he preferred to interview his Swedish visitor and opened the discussion: " You come from Sweden, can you tell me how your country was able to stay out of wars for over 200 years even when

neighboring Norway and Denmark were occupied in World War II. The red haired tall Ivar Ohman answered slowly. We are a Pacifist nation. Like to be left alone. I think we are an international Red Cross Ship which sends food to war torn areas and doctors and medicine." Chaplin seemed not to be satisfied, why is your system different? " Well we have usually a Labor/Farm coalition . Our labor unions built our supermarkets and new industries . Our industries have learned that good labor relations help everybody in the country. We have only 8 million people, fewer than Los Angeles and Hollywood."

" You are very lucky" said the actor. Now Ivar, a Social Democrat volunteered information. "Sweden was scared of the Nazis and compromised, we shipped iron ore and ballbearings to Germany. We also bought some of the stolen Nazi Gold to pay for our deliveries. Press freedom was limited they even confiscated my friend Kurt's biography of Goring, the Luftwaffe chief."

Chaplin was no longer bored with our visit and turned toward me with his question. " You are Mr. Ohman's translator but his English is pretty good. " Well we are long time

friends whenever he visits America he asks me to be his translator. He took me along with a dozen Swedish Labor Union leaders to see Eleanor Roosevelt. Since I live in California he asked me to join him again as a translator. I met Ivar when I arrived in Sweden as a political refugee from Nazi Germany. I was also a contributor to his magazine. Suddenly Chaplin's face seemed far away for a moment. But then he jumped a question at me. "What is a Zappel Jude" You speak German can you tell me? Joseph Goebbels, Hitler's Propaganda minister had called me a Zappel Jude. I could not find it in my dictionary.

Somewhat bewildered and a bit confused I tried to find a proper definition. It meant to be a fidgety, jittery, dangling Jew." Chaplin was amused and laughed loudly.

"That's not all. Hear this, a Nazi anti semitic Lexikon claimed that my Jewish name was Thonstein and described me as 'a little Jewish acrobat as disgusting as tedious' " Ivar found the time had come to ask "Well, Mr. Chaplin "Are you a Jew"?

"No" he replied very softly. "But I felt deeply for the millions of Jews who were murdered by these Nazi hordes. The genius of the Jews has contributed immensely to our world's culture." Yes" added Ivar "Jesus was a Jew".

Chaplin seemed now ready to change the subject and told Ivar that both of his parents were music Hall entertainers. But Hannah his mother could not provide them "so my brother Sydney and I were put into the Lambeth Workhouse and later on admitted to the Hanwell

School for Orphans and Destitute Children. This is my Dickensian background which formed my life and my films."

Ivar asked more and more questions like how Chaplin had over come all hurdles to reach Mount Olympus. Chaplin gave some information, how he had worked as a Pantomime, he had come to the USA in 1910 quite penniless. He had known poverty at its worst and this was the real reason for his tragic comic characters. In 1913 he was hired by the Keystone Cops producers for \$ 125 a week and by 1917 had earned over one million dollars a year. "Believe me Mount Olympus is a very loney place and you can fall off easily".

He told Ivar that he refuses to discuss his wives or loves

but stated he had many friends and good relations with most film people including Greta Garbo, Sophia Loren, Sam Goldwyn, Einstein and many more.. On the political side he had contacts with the late President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill. He chuckled when he described his relations with William R. Hearst the newspaper king who had published Hitler's and Mussolini's columns in over a hundreds newspapers in the US. That was before Pearl Harbor.

Among his enemies were J. Edgar Hoover the FBI chief who wanted him to be deported as a Communist sympathizer, the McCarthy witch hunters and the House Un American Committee." I was accused of tax evasion and cleared. I was asked if I was a Communist and I said NO" Both FBI special agents and Congressional Committee members asked him if he believes that Hanns Eisler was a Communist and I said. He is a friend of mine, a great compose. I was asked if

he was a Communist would I remain his friend and I said: YES.

Why did I not become a US citizen? I answered that I am proud to be a citizen of my native country Britain." ( He was later knighted by Queen Elizabeth II and under the Freedom of Information act it was disclosed that the FBI was holding 1069 pages on Chaplin and his friends and acquaintances)

In 1952 Chaplin went on vacation to Europe and was refused re-entry to the USA. The radical right wing and Mr. Hoover and McCarthy had won. Only decades later did Chaplin return to Hollywood to receive a special Motion Picture Award with great fanfare, honors and apologies.

As the evening progressed we were served some good wine and cheese and Ivar discussed the anti Communist fears and hysteria which ravaged this great country. They discussed his old films and it's meanings from Goldrush to the Tramp roles. Modern Times and the rest of his film creations. Chaplins dihumanizing workhouse and orphanage impressions had never left him .

Ivar was most interested to discuss The Great Dictator which portrayed much of Chaplin's philosophy.

It's the story of a rebellious Jewish ghetto resident who appeared under the rule of Adenoyd Hinkel (Hitler). It's a parody of the great dictator who plays football with the planet earth . It showed Chaplin 's disgust with Nazi terror, anti semitism and Hitler's war. Chaplin showed Ivar the original screen play. He gave him a copy. It containd sentences like" I should like to help everyone if possible, , Jew, gentile, blackman, white....we don't want to hate and despise one another."

All Chaplin wanted to prove was that life can be beautiful if we are free of hate and war. When Ivar discussed MODERN TIMES Chaplin simply stated he had invisioned how man created machines and how machines can destroy man.

This great session had to end after midnight. We were grateful to this great artist who like many before him and many after him have tried to change the world.

Ivar had the courage to embrace Charlie the future Lord Charles as we departed and I thanked the man who to both of us was the tramp,gentleman,poet,dreamer,explorer, pioneer film maker the Zappel Juide and genius.

Treason has been the author's business for more than twenty years. He was "wanted" for "high treason" himself by both Nazis and Communists; he has seen revolution, betrayal, perfidy and deception; and he has always fought back for the forces of democracy.

Dr. Singer has appeared on some of the largest college seminars in this country. He has also had many of his articles and stories printed in such publications as THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, READERS DIGEST, THE WASHINGTON POST, and THE NEW YORK TIMES. He is also the author of a syndicated column in both the United States and the REUTER FEATURES in England.



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# **"I LED 3 LIVES"**



**dr. kurt d. singer**



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**End of Kurt D. Singer Collection**

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